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deaths from measles, none before; 3 deaths from beriberi, the same as before, and 53 deaths from tuberculosis, an increase of 5.

During the week ended February 23 there were 243 deaths from all causes, a decrease of 18 as compared with the preceding week; 9 deaths from *accessio pernicioso*, a decrease of 6; 21 deaths from yellow fever, an increase of 10; 13 deaths from smallpox, a decrease of 1; no deaths from measles, a decrease of 2; 2 deaths from beriberi, a decrease of 1, and 52 deaths from tuberculosis, a decrease of 1.

*Bills of health.*

Since last report the following-named ships have been inspected and received bills of health of this office: February 23, steamship *Bellander*, British, for New York. February 26, steamship *Roman Prince*, British, for New York; steamship *Harvest Queen*, British, for Philadelphia. March 4, steamship *Hevelius*, Belgian, for New York. March 5, barkentine *Josephine*, for Baltimore. March 7, steamship *Edenbridge*, British, for Baltimore.

Respectfully,

W. HAVELBURG, M. D.,  
*Acting Assistant Surgeon, U. S. M. H. S.*

The SURGEON-GENERAL,  
*U. S. Marine-Hospital Service.*

CHINA.

*Report on plague in Amoy during 1898 and 1899.*

AMOY, CHINA, *February 12, 1900.*

SIR: I have the honor to forward herewith a report on bubonic plague at Amoy made by Carl Johnson, M. D., acting consular surgeon at this consulate.

As the plague has recently made its appearance in Manila and there are thousands of Chinese going from Amoy to the Philippines annually, this report may be of some interest to those concerned.

Respectfully,

A. BURLINGAME JOHNSON,  
*U. S. Consul.*

Hon. ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE.

[Inclosure.]

SIR: In reply to your request for data concerning bubonic plague in this port, I have the honor to report as follows:

There have been 2 epidemics since I began acting as medical officer for your consulate in March, 1898.

The first began about March 30, 1898, and I was able to declare the port again clear of it September 7 of the same year. The second began with a few sporadic cases about June 1, 1899, reached its height during July, and was ended by September 1, 1899. The epidemic of 1898, therefore, lasted five months and that of 1899 three months.

It must be borne in mind that it is not easy to get even approximately accurate information as to the extent of the prevalence of an epidemic in Amoy, or as to the mortality rate. No official record is kept of deaths or burials and no effort is made to prevent or control epidemics in any way by the Chinese officials. I believe the only exception to this statement is the effort made by them to clean the streets at your suggestion during the epidemic of 1899. As Amoy is a city of 350,000 inhabitants huddled into a space of 3 square miles, with narrow streets, without sewers, and only a few feet above sea level, it may be readily understood that their efforts were abortive.

To effectually clean the streets of the accumulated filth of ages would be a problem that would tax the resources of the most expert sanitary engineer, and would involve the expenditure of a large amount of money.

The plague seemed to appear soon after the beginning of the cloudy and rainy

weather, which is associated with the warm spring months in this port, and to decrease and gradually disappear after the excessively hot and dry weather of the middle summer begins. Between midsummer and the following spring, an occasional well-defined case is met, but it does not tend to spread.

The only official attempt to ascertain the extent of any epidemic is that made by the imperial Chinese customs, which is under the control of Europeans. They send out daily and inquire of the various coffin shops as to the number of coffins sold the day previous. Any great excess over the normal number indicates approximately the number of deaths from an existing epidemic. The Chinese are extremely reticent, however, about admitting the presence of plague, and the coffin dealers, who are all Chinese, probably falsify their reports very frequently.

I am sorry to say that the shipping firms and merchants often endeavor to prevent consular officers from learning the extent of an epidemic in order that traffic and business may not be interfered with. They spread this feeling, and a Chinese is afraid to tell a consular officer of a case for fear of persecution. At one time, after trying in various ways to have this port declared free from plague, a circular was widely distributed announcing that \$50 reward would be paid for a genuine case. The reward was never claimed, although a man died of plague in the very room where the circular was printed within forty-eight hours after it was issued, and although at that time an American-educated Chinese physician was treating numerous cases daily.

With this condition of affairs existing, it will be readily understood that reliable information is difficult to obtain. Something may be learned by questioning educated English-speaking Chinese, and much valuable information is received from the missionaries, who are intimately associated with the localities in which they work.

The Reformed Church of America has had a hospital here for many years in charge of an American physician. A medical school for the instruction of Chinese boys is run in connection with this, and it is principally by seeing cases in consultation with the graduates of this school and conferring with them, and with Dr. Otte, the physician in charge of the hospital, that I am able to make approximately accurate reports on the health of the port and surrounding localities.

The reports of these graduates are usually reliable, and are important in determining the health of the large cities lying along the various rivers in the interior of this province, as large numbers of Chinese come from these cities yearly and embark here for the Philippine Islands.

The epidemic of 1898 was characterized by the large number of deaths in certain parts of the city with relative freedom from the disease in other portions. In 1899 the cases were, perhaps, not as numerous in limited areas but were more uniformly distributed throughout the city. Taken altogether, the total mortality was probably greater in the former year.

The highest mortality for any one day is variously estimated at from 100 to 150. The height of the epidemic in both years was about the first week in July.

There has never yet been a foreigner attacked by plague here. The Chinese wife of a Portuguese, living in foreign style and with fairly good sanitary surroundings, died of the disease. It was ascertained that she had shortly before visited Chinese relatives in a portion of the city where plague was prevalent.

From my observations, I should say that about 90 per cent of the cases are fatal. I have not found that any method of treatment used by me has had any appreciable effect in reducing the death rate. The immediate cause of death seems to be a rapid weakening of the heart which is not counteracted by the usual heart stimulants, with uncontrollable vomiting.

The plan adopted for inspection of the Chinese departing for Manila is as follows: Each intending passenger is examined by me at my office, and if free from disease is given a card which allows him to go on board the steamer on the day of sailing. Just before sailing I go aboard and again inspect each one, making an especially careful examination of those showing any evidence of disease not noted in the first inspection at my office. I am thus enabled to eliminate those suffering from chronic diseases, such as leprosy, before going on board the steamer, and can devote my attention more fully to the detection of symptoms of any acute disease that may have developed after the first examination.

As there is usually an interval of from two days to a week between the two inspections, this in a measure complies with the requirements of the U. S. Marine-Hospital Service. A more literal compliance is impracticable at the present time as there is no disinfecting plant here, and no place suitable for detaining and isolating passengers for the five days prescribed before embarkation. In my opinion, the only effectual protection for the Philippines lies in a thorough quarantine system in Manila. The most that can be assured here is that none actually ill of a contagious disease are allowed to sail. Even with the double inspection as now practiced, a man might be landed in Manila

three or four days before the development of an attack of plague, the germs of which he had brought with him from his native village.

While in the absence of an epidemic the above precautions are reasonably effective, the rule you have heretofore enforced is certainly to be commended; that is, to refuse to visé passports or certificates during the existence of an epidemic in Amoy or the surrounding localities. And while you have reminded me that you have no definite instructions covering this refusal, it seems to me to be the only way to prevent the wholesale introduction of plague into our island possessions.

Respectfully,

CARL JOHNSON, M. D.,  
*Acting Consular Surgeon.*

A. BURLINGAME JOHNSON, ESQ.,  
*U. S. Consul, Amoy, China.*

NOTE.—Other reports on Amoy and its conditions will be found in ABSTRACT OF SANITARY REPORTS, Marine-Hospital Service, Vol. VII, 1892, page 8. Also Annual Report of Marine-Hospital Service for 1897, pages 435, and 446 to 448, reports of Surgeon S. D. Brooks, Marine-Hospital Service.

#### CUBA.

##### *Reports from Cienfuegos and Santa Cruz del Sur.*

CIENFUEGOS, CUBA, *April 2, 1900.*

SIR: I have the honor to report that during the week ended March 31, 1900, 26 deaths have occurred in this city, 4 from malaria, 2 from intestinal diseases, and 3 from tuberculosis. Seven deaths occurred in the civil hospital. No contagious diseases reported. Death rate for the week is 33.89. Four foreign vessels were inspected at this port and 4 cleared for other ports during the week. One hundred and nineteen alien steerage passengers were admitted, after inspection, from Venezuela, on the schooner *Pedro*. During the month of March, 88 deaths have occurred in this city, no contagious diseases, 25 of the deaths occurring in the civil hospital. Twenty-eight foreign vessels, 321 passengers, 1,198 members of crew, and 129 alien steerage passengers have been inspected. Thirty-two foreign vessels cleared for other ports.

*Santa Cruz del Sur.*—Dr. Juan R. Xiques reports no deaths and no contagious diseases at that port during the week and 1 foreign vessel inspected.

Respectfully,

J. M. LINDSLEY,  
*Acting Assistant Surgeon, U. S. M. H. S.*

The SURGEON-GENERAL,  
*U. S. Marine-Hospital Service.*

##### *Report from Casilda.*

CIENFUEGOS, CUBA, *April 3, 1900.*

SIR: The following report from our substation at Casilda, Cuba, arrived too late for entering in our weekly report for the week ended March 31, 1900:

*Casilda.*—Dr. Alejandro Cantero reports 5 deaths in the city of Trinidad; no contagious diseases. Inspected 1 foreign vessel during the week.

Respectfully,

J. M. LINDSLEY,  
*Acting Assistant Surgeon, U. S. M. H. S.*

The SURGEON-GENERAL,  
*U. S. Marine-Hospital Service.*

##### *Report from Havana.*

HAVANA, CUBA, *April 2, 1900.*

SIR: I have the honor to forward herewith the report for the week ended March 31, 1900.